

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

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1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)	2. REPORT DATE	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED
	Sept 1997	FINAL
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE An Investigation of the Poleward Undercurrent over the Continental Margin of North America		5. FUNDING NUMBERS N00014-96-1-0039
6. AUTHOR(S) R.L. Smith and P.M. Kosro		
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) College of Oceanic & Atmospheric Sciences Oregon State University 104 Ocean Admin Bldg Corvallis, OR 97331-5503		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Office of Naval Research ONR Code 322PO 800 N Quincy St Arlington VA 22217-5660		10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		
12a. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release Distribution unlimited		12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE
13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words) Acoustic Doppler Current Profiles from transects across the continental margin, from 34°N to 51°N during the summer of 1995, were analyzed. A subsurface undercurrent was observed in 86 of 110 sections with speed greater than 5 cm/s and thickness greater than 100 m at 200 m. The mean poleward flow was 20 cm/s. The data suggest continuity of the undercurrent over the entire latitude and range.		
14. SUBJECT TERMS Physical Oceanography California Current System Currents		15. NUMBER OF PAGES 2
		16. PRICE CODE
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT unclassified	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE unclassified	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT unclassified
		20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT none

FINAL TECHNICAL REPORT
ONR GRANT # N00014-9610039

Robert L. Smith and P. Michael Kosro

An Investigation of the Poleward Undercurrent Over the Continental Margin of North America

The focus of the research was on the ocean along its eastern boundaries. Recent studies supported by ONR have provided the data capable of demonstrating the spatial and temporal extent of the poleward flow and describing its kinematic and dynamic characteristics (Smith et al. 1996). This grant analyzed Acoustic Doppler Current Profiling (ADCP) data collected during the triennial NMFS acoustic-trawl survey for Pacific Whiting (Hake) which was conducted from 1 July to 1 September 1995 over the continental shelf and slope from Point Conception, California ($34^{\circ} 30'N$) to Dixon Entrance, Alaska ($54^{\circ} 30'N$). Sections across the continental margin were made at 20 km spacing; two frequencies (38, 120 kHz) were used to collect acoustic data to describe the biological scattering and a 150 kHz ADCP was used to describe ocean currents (Wilson et al., 1997). The ADCP data provided high quality current measurements between 20 and 350 m (Pierce et al., 1996). A subsurface poleward undercurrent was observed in 86 of the 110 sections between 34° and 51° N with speed > 5 cm/s, width > 10 km, and thickness > 100 m at 200 m. The mean poleward velocity in the sections was about 20 cm/s. The data suggest continuity of the undercurrent over the entire latitudinal range, from 34° N to 51° N with a slight poleward weakening and deepening.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS (Abstracts)

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